1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)195! FN17 Ngonde FN1
Nyakyusa

and some informants suggested that it only occurred between the villages of different chiefs, though others insisted that it did occur between villages of the same chiefdom. Indeed any seduction of a woman of another village was liable to lead to war. A man of Bulindanajo seduced the wife of the headman of Bujege, Mwansambe. The men of Bulindanajo returned the woman to her husband, saying to their fellow: 'The men of Bujege are fearsome (*basisya*), it's a village of fathers, she's your mother' (cf. Document p. 181). But Mwansambe was angry and made war. The men of Bulindanajo protested, saying: 'We brought the woman back!' but he took no notice and attacked them. He was defeated, and fled.

A thief or an obstinate debtor was also a danger to his neighbours. For a victim or creditor living in another chiefdom, and so unable to obtain satisfaction in a chief's court—since a chief paid little attention to a complainant who was not his own man—might seize the wife of any village-mate of the man who had his property. Hence, the old men say, thieves and adulterers were liable to be banished from a village[1] just like witches and sorcerers, for they too brought misfortune on their fellows.

War between villages was apparently the usual upshot of an attack on the village neighbour of an enemy, but occasionally a settlement was arranged between the two villages concerned, and the adulterer or thief was held responsible for compensating his injured neighbour, or the latter's kinsmen. Kalunda and Mwalubunju explained: 'In the old days if a man ran off with my wife I should go and kill a village-mate of his. That meant, "Go, you villagers and look for my wife." Yes, this happened even in a village of my own chief. Then the villagers would go and look for my wife and when they found her with their neighbour they would bring her back to me with a spear or hoe as compensation. The man they would accuse, saying: "It was you who killed your fellow", so that he would have to make peace with the family of the dead man, not I. He would give them a daughter of his own to wife, or else pay ten cows, and they would be relatives then. Yes, ten cows they paid for a man's death, though only two for a woman in marriage.' Here the differing responsibilities of kinsmen and fellow villagers are evident.

The village was a fighting unit taking up quarrels on its own

[1] A cattle thief caught in the act was speared. . . . MacKenzie, op. cit., p. 86.

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

34. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN PAGANS AND CHRISTIANS

a. Christian suing a pagan

Twijulege (Christian man).

691
683 'Ańisile (a Christian elder) and Kujobanabatwa (a pagan) had a dispute. Cattle belonging to Ańisile and his fellows ate Kujobanabatwa's crop. Ańisile went to drive the cattle out of the field and Kukobanabatwa met him as he was driving them out. Kujobanabatwa swore at Ańisile. So Ańisile got angry and went to the chief; the chief took the case to Court and Kujobanabatwa was found guilty and ordered to pay 10s. He paid up and the case was finished.'

b. Arbitration between pagan and Christian

627
686 'L. (a Christian preacher) when he was visiting the Ngoni[1] in the bush country bought rice from a pagan Ngoni, Manana, and promised to pay him later on. He was a long time in paying his debt so the Ngoni went to Ulindula, an elderly Christian living near L., saying: "L. has my shilling. He took my rice." L. agreed that he owed the Ngoni a shilling; he said that he had not yet got the money, but would get it very soon. The Ngoni went home and after some time, as he was not paid, he came again. Ulindula tried to pacify him. The Ngoni said: "If the case defeats you, I shall go to Court." So Ulindula called his fellows Rheuben and Hoseah to pacify the Ngoni, and the latter agreed to wait; but still L. did not pay up. So when the missionary visited, the Ngoni took the case to him. How it was decided (by the missionary) no one knows.'

c. Pagan suing a Christian

Mwaisumo (clerk).

691
683 'Mwansepe, a pagan man, has a young son who was once bathing in a stream when Anangisye, a Christian, came down to bathe also. Anangisye said to the boy: "Get out, I want to bathe." The boy replied: "See, I was bathing here first", at which Anangisye got angry and beat the boy.

'Then Mwansepe and his son hastened to Mundekesye's court

[1] There are one or two villages of Ngoni immigrants in the strip of unoccupied bush country between Selya and the Lake-shore plain. They mix very little with the Nyakyusa.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

find it. There are many cases like that. My friends in the age-village will go to a diviner who will declare that the shades are angry because I do not care for my father.' If a daughter makes a runaway marriage her father is angry and it is believed that either she may not conceive or her baby may be ailing until the marriage-cattle and bull of puberty have been given by her husband and accepted by her father.

The respect and obedience due to a father is due to his heir, and in certain circumstances to his sister also; while on his part the heir has the same obligations to his juniors as the deceased had. Fibombe cited the example, already quoted, of a man quarrelling with his dead father's sister over the distribution of the marriage-cattle for his own sister, and the girl failing to conceive because of the anger of her father's sister. If a son, whose parents are dead, neglects to provide his sister with the customary gifts of food when she returns to her husband after a visit to her 'father', he may become impotent: 'Those below are angry and when he has begotten twins he will have trouble at the ritual.' Or the girl may fall ill. 'She thinks: "Who is my father? This is my father, but he does not care for me." ' The mystical power of a senior relative is linked directly with his obligation to give gifts:

> My father's elder half-brother has power over me only if he has given marriage-cattle for my father or nurtured him. If he has given him cattle to marry a wife then he has power over him. . . . My superior (*mbala gwangu*) is he who gives me everything.

Favouritism in a polygynous family, shown in the unfair division of milk or meat or fish by the husband between his wives, is thought to anger the shades, which cause his cows to bleed from the udder when milked, or prevent fish entering his traps, and so do the bad temper and insulting language of a quarrelsome wife. Mwakwelebeja explained that:

> If a woman is bad-tempered when she is making beer the beer goes sour. If my wife and I quarrel my shades are angry and the beer is spoiled. I say to my wife: 'You have spoiled the beer because you do not listen to what I say.'

Neglect of his wards by the heir is a wrong-doing frequently mentioned.

> It is said that if I neglect my brother's children he and my father will be very angry, they will not come to meet me when I die, as the

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

686 shades usually do, and I shall wander a long time on the way to the land of the shades because I shall have no relatives to show me the way. And then when I get there I shall still have trouble. They will drive me away from them, and I shall live alone, apart from them, quite separate.

775 764 More rarely a shade is said to be angry because his grave has been left unswept, or he has not been buried where he asked to be.

621 681 The kinds of behaviour believed to be punished by 'the breath of men' are very similar to those thought to be punished by the anger of senior kinsmen; and, indeed, as we have seen, kinsmen and neighbours may murmur together against a son who has seduced his father's wife, a girl who has behaved insultingly to her parents-in-law, either verbally or by a breach of avoidance, and an heir who has neglected his wards or has neglected the customary ritual for his father, more particularly the customary killing of a cow when he enters into his inheritance. It is said that neglect to provide them with certain customary feasts infuriates neighbours more than anything else.[1]

The misfortunes that threaten from the neglect of rituals, and from the anger of kinsmen and neighbours, are loss of sanity, of life or health or fertility; a difficult labour or a lingering death; repeated miscarriages; loss of beauty (a wicked woman goes bald or turns reddish); scanty crops or sick herds, or, nowadays, unemployment—the man whose father is angry does not find a job. Only rarely is it suggested that punishment may be postponed until after death and then what is feared is that the shades of the lineage will not receive their kinsman.

775 771 688 When Nyakyusa talk about their religion they speak mostly of external things, of the rituals, of the angry words spoken by kinsmen or neighbours and of the fearful effects upon one against whom this anger is directed. Misfortune is said to be brought down on a man by his parents muttering in anger over the fire, by people murmuring against him (the word used is that for the humming of a hive of bees). The emphasis is on outspoken complaint or criticism. But it is also thought that 'the shades see what is within a man': if he stints one wife of fish, then 'even though the woman herself has not said anything, the shades hear the thought of the belly'. Sleeplessness and an unquiet mind are taken as evidence of the anger of the shades or the attacks of witches.

[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 105–6.

8: Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

593 they continually give each other cows; between their respective sons also the exchange usually continues, but between their grandsons it lapses.
593 Reciprocity is expected and can be legally enforced, but it is not insisted
●686 upon so long as the two men concerned are friends, and its legal enforcement at once breaks the relationship. If two such half-brothers (or their sons) quarrel, one may take legal action for "separation" (*okolekana*) against the other. The cows that have been handed over by both sides since the beginning of the relationship (perhaps twenty or thirty years before) are counted up, and one or the other is ordered to pay over the balance to make the numbers equal. After this the two are "no longer kinsmen," they have no mutual obligations and do not attend each other's funerals.

593 It is usual for a father to create this relationship between his senior
428 son and the eldest of each group of full-brothers, so that by this exchange of cows the family is held together. The linkage of half-brothers, whether by blood or by "milking each others cows," is important in inheritance. If a man with no full-brother dies and leaves no sons, or sons too young to inherit, then the inheritance passes to a linked half-brother; to a half-brother linked by blood if there is one, if there is not then to one linked by exchange of cows.

771 Religion enters continually into family life and helps to maintain wider kinship bonds also. The Nyakyusa religion falls, broadly, into three parts: The Ancestor cult, Witchcraft and Magic. Taken as a whole their religion, as they believe, secures for them many of the most important values of life, health, good crops and success in various enterprises; it provides an intelligible explanation of death and misfortune by tracing them to the ill-will either of the ancestral spirits or of living men acting through witchcraft or magic; in its rituals it resolves fear and replaces it by hope and confidence; while the believed destructive action of the ancestors and of men is generally, though not entirely, linked with morality.[10] The commonest explanation of misfortune is that some wrong done by the victim, or by his close kinsman, has provoked the spirits or his fellow men to anger.

769 As long as a man has alive a father, a father's full-brother, or a senior
753 brother or half-brother[11] of his own, this senior kinsman deals with the ancestral spirits, not only on his behalf, but also on behalf of his wives and children; and health is the chief value which his prayers are believed to secure for them. In the absence of sickness or misfortune no appeal is

[10] cf. Godfrey Wilson. "An African Morality." *Africa*. Jan. 1936.
[11] Provided the relationship between them has not been legally broken (*vide supra*.).

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

783 Why had Mwaipopo refused so long to enter into relationship with
782 Mwaseba? Mwaipopo explained that the delay was on account of
Mpeta. 'Let my wife come first,' he said, and told how, when the case
[684] first came to light, he had taken Mpeta to his kinsman Mwaiteteja,
who took her to Mwaseba's village headman, Kakuju, and he to her
people. She must come back the same way, and has not yet done so.
Ngulyo said that at first he had been inclined to criticize Mwaipopo,
but now saw that he was right. Kasitile spoke of the enormity of
[835] Mwaseba's offence, for Mpeta is a kinswoman of Mwaipopo's wife
Kalobo, and on the death of her son Mwakalobo, Mwaseba was put
in his place, so he has seduced a woman who, by legal fiction, is his
mother, as well as the wife of his father. His act is *doubly* incestuous.

●[686] They then spoke of the separation of those who pray at Mbyanga
(*vide supra*, p. 80) and blamed them for it. 'Have they millet though?
Kyala judges them himself.' Then Kasitile reproved Mwaipopo (the
chief) for another matter. 'But you, Mwakagile (116, identified with
his grandfather 59) have little wisdom left. Why did you not give some
of the beer which we drank recently at your house[1] to the people of
Ipinda, the BaKalinga? The food from a distance you should divide.'
And Mwaipopo agreed meekly [i.e. Mwaipopo has built with his
young wives away from his inherited wife Kalinga (senior widow of
115) and is apt to neglect her; he must send some of the 'food from a
distance'—ceremonial presents from affines—to his senior wives, not give
it all to his friends and young wives.]

Then there were mutual compliments and self-depreciation between
Kasitile and Kissogota (the commoner priest). Kissogota pointed to
Mwaipopo and Kasitile, and said: 'You are impressive you, you are
impressive, we are mere cannibals (*balyabandu*).' Kasitile replied: 'You
are impressive yourself, if I look at you my body changes.'

Suddenly Kissogota got up and pretended to go: 'I am off, friends!'
Ngulyo started to protest: 'We have not yet finished, we are speaking.'
But Kissogota said, 'No, you told me to "be off"!' He went outside but
returned admitting he had been only pretending. Mwaipopo: 'Yes,
do you think we don't know you? Drink! Why do you not drink?'

The Mwamakunda began to ask angrily: 'Why do you shut up
words in the heart? Why? Do you wish that Mwakisambwe (i.e.
Kasitile, 86, identified with his great-grandfather, 30) should become
a fool? Kissogota answered: 'We have not yet done so, Mwambagoje
(Mwamakunda), we have not yet; do you think we are angry? Who
went to fetch Kasitile from the plain? It was we, we went ourselves.'

Njobakosa took up the matter: 'We have power we have, if we
[754] please we can give the chief worms.' (This was said fiercely; Kasitile
and Mwaipopo listened without comments. It was the crucial moment

[1] Sent as a present by Mwaipopo's affines.